



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2257 ~ Gideon and the Angel.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

Forty years after the prophetess, Deborah, with army leader, Barak, won a resounding battle victory for the Israelites, the people again turned aside from worshipping God, their great deliverer, to worshipping the pagan Canaanite idols instead. God was greatly displeased with this and He sent the Midianites to harass Israel. At each harvest time for the next 7 years, the Midianites and their allies would come to Canaan and rob the Israelites of their crops and animals, leaving nothing behind for the Israelites to eat. This caused the Israelites to become so poor, that they finally cried out to the Lord for help.

The Lord responded by sending an unnamed prophet to rebuke the Israelites for worshipping other gods as this was something the Lord had forbidden them to do. Although the Israelites didn't deserve God's further help, the Lord decided to act on Israel's behalf by raising up a leader to deliver them.

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The Lord spoke to Gideon, telling him that the Lord was with him. What an encouraging thing to be told in such a time of constant trouble! The Lord told Gideon to go in his own might and that God would save the Israelites from the Midianites through him.

Just as Israel's first leader, Moses, had done, so also did Gideon – he tried backing out of God's assignment to deliver the Israelites from their enemies. Gideon wasn't a trained soldier so he focused on his family being the weakest of their clan and that he was the least of his family. But these were two reasons why God chose Gideon! The Lord chooses to work through those who are the weakest and the least, so that no one may boast before Him. The Lord Himself promised to be with Gideon.

Still uncertain, Gideon asked the Lord for a sign. It's not wrong to ask the Lord for a sign to confirm God's clear direction of starting something new for Him. This doesn't need to imply a lack of faith; it can simply indicate a desire to check one's guidance before proceeding. How gracious the Lord was to wait around under a tree while Gideon prepared a young goat and some unleavened bread to bring out to Him as an offering! These items would have been quite a sacrifice for him to make when food in the land was so scarce. But God gave Gideon a sign of His approval by burning up the offering. Then the Lord departed.

Early the next morning, a crowd came knocking on Gideon's front door, demanding his blood for desecrating their worship centre. His father, Joash, gave a very wise answer to those people: "If Baal really was a god, he could fight for himself." The people may have thought that Baal would put Gideon to death but when this didn't happen, the people started to side with Gideon.

Then the Midianites and the other eastern people came back into Canaan as in times past but this time, it appeared they were ready for battle. The Spirit of the Lord came onto Gideon and he blew a trumpet, calling all troops to come to him. The very people who had wanted to kill him for destroying the altar of Baal were the first to come! Altogether, Gideon had 32,000 men while there were 135,000 men in the Midianite camp. The odds of winning 1 to 4 seemed a little overwhelming, so Gideon asked the Lord for another sign if he should lead the Israelites into battle. At this point, Gideon lacked a full faith in God to do a mighty miracle for the Israelites.

So Gideon said to God: "Look, I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece only, and it's dry on all the ground, then I shall know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said." Next morning, Gideon wrung a bowlful of overnight dew out of the fleece. But he may have realised that dew would take longer to dry out of the fleece than the ground around it. So he wasn't sure now if what happened was just the natural way things are or if God had really given him a sign.

So Gideon came again to God and he asked first, that God not be angry with him, and then to reverse the previous night's request. Gideon wanted the fleece to be dry and all the ground around it to be wet with dew. And again God, with great patience and kindness, did as Gideon requested. God knew Gideon's heart of obedience, so God was willing to give him the extra assurance that he had asked for.

There is a lesson here for all of us: if we want reassurance from God, we must first demonstrate obedience to His commands. If we are unwilling to obey in the first place, God will not give us full assurance that we are in His will. God calls us to step out in faith and obedience, based on what we know of Him already. Then, as we go forward, He will give us all the reassurances we need. He'll give us peace inside and then clear a clear direction to follow. We won't need to put out sheep fleeces in the way that Gideon did.

We can falsely ask God to give us a miracle answer when in reality, we are really being unwilling to obey. The kind of 'fleece' we should start using is praying about our circumstances. We can ask: "If the Lord allows 'this' circumstance to happen, then I will do 'this'; but if the Lord allow 'that' circumstance to happen by a particular point in time, then I will do 'that'." God often guides us by normal circumstances and will give us wisdom to understand what that guidance is.

Once Gideon had his soldiers camped close to the Midianite camp, the Lord spoke to Gideon again. Because God wanted to keep the Israelites from boasting that it was they who had defeated the Midianites, God decided to reduce the size of Gideon's small army. God firstly told Gideon to send home those who were fearful, which left only 10,000 men. Then Gideon was to take the men down to the water for a drink. Those who lapped the water with their tongues were to be set apart from those who drank the water using cupped hands.

There were only 300 in the group who drank the water using cupped hands. God told Gideon that He would save Israel through only them. All the rest of the men were sent back to their tents. God wanted to make sure that the Israelites would be left with no grounds to boast.

Have you ever considered what's so bad about boasting? God hates human pride. One of the most obvious ways for people to show their pride is to boast about themselves and their accomplishments, and not about the Lord and His works. As a result, they take credit for what God alone does and has done.

Some people boast to become the centre of attention in a crowd. They look for displays of power and intelligence. However, in 1st Corinthians, Chapter 1, it says: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." God is superior over all the power and wisdom of the world. In that same chapter, we're taught: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

Through his obedience to God, Gideon became one of the great heroes of the Christian faith, as listed in Hebrews, Chapter 11. By tearing down Baal's altar, Gideon showed his dedication to God and won over his family, community and most of northern Israel. Christ needs committed followers who, like Gideon, are willing to face danger and death for His sake; those who are willing to take up their cross and follow Him, no matter what the cost.

God can use any of us as He used Gideon. We may start out doubting God and our own abilities, and so look for reassurances to strengthen our weak faith. We can also expect that God will give us a test to see if we'll obey Him. Steadily, God will prepare us for the work that He has given us to do and will fill us with His Holy Spirit to enable us to do it. Christians today are surely called to fight battles of false teaching, idolatry of every kind, worldliness, ungodliness, boastfulness and pride.

Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 16, says: "Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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